Christian Community

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CALL NEW SECRETARY FOR RACE RELATIONS

The Reverend Chester L. Marcus, formerly pastor of the Washington Street Presbyterian Church, of Reading, Pennsylvania, has been called to be Associate Secretary for Race Relations by the Board of National Missions and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Rev. C. L. Marcus

A native of Swiftown, Mississippi, and a graduate of Alcorn A. and M. College, Mississippi, and the Theological Seminary of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, he began his new work in the office of the Commission on Christian Social Action in Cleveland on June 15th.

While in Reading, Mr. Marcus served his denomination as counselor and director in youth and family camps, as advisor to the Westminster Fellowship, and as a member of Philadelphia Presbytery's committee on church cooperation and union. He was well known in the community as chairman of the Commission on Social Education and Action of the Greater Reading Council of Churches, as a founder and director of Reading Fellowship House, as president of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and as a member of the Community Race Relations Council.

Highly commended by pastors and lay people of the Reading area, the new secretary should be warmly received by our churches everywhere as a speaker and as a consultant to work with congregations and committees which are seeking to develop better racial understanding and a more inclusive community outreach.

CHURCHMEN MEET AT TIFFIN

By F. Nelsen Schlegel

"The Christian and His Daily Work" was the theme of a highly worthwhile conference on the campus of Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio, June 25 to 27, 1954. One hundred and seventy-two men and eighteen women, nearly all of them lay people, participated in thirteen extended vocational group meetings considering the above theme. They came together from 31 of the 34 synods of the denomination.

To the best of our knowledge this was the first national denominational conference dealing with this theme since the National Council of Churches sponsored such a gathering in Buffalo two years ago, which brought together some 300 delegates from the United States and Canada. The Commission on Christian Social Action and the Churchmen's Brotherhood shared in sponsoring the Tiffin meeting. Leaders of the committee which prepared and administered the two-day conference were: Carlton Lang, Toledo, Ohio; A. O. McClellan, Warren, Ohio; J. Kenneth Kohler, St. Louis; Huber F. Klemme, Cleveland; Albert Althaus, Clair Studer, Walter S. Press, Leonard C. Brecher, Milton W. Meyers and Bruce V. Schantz. The local arrangements committee included Dr. Terry Wickham, Richard Pfeiffer and the late Reverend Ira W. Frantz. The Moderator was Russell H. Sides, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Vice-Moderator was Carlton Lang.

This was really a "workshop," with delegates divided into thirteen vocational groups for careful consideration of ways in which the general theme applied to agricultural workers; attorneys; communications people - newsmen, radio and TV workers; educators; engineers and technicians; government workers; health services; homemakers; industrial managers; industrial workers; labor representatives; retail salesmen; and sales and service representatives.

Adopt Message Unanimously

A message, which was unanimously adopted by the assembly, reflected the conviction of all conference participants that all Christians may be sure of a divine call to some useful work. A Christian at his daily work may be engaged in something more than a "job." The message highlighted the conference aim "to see our daily work as a service to God." The entire message is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Vocational meetings were full of en-

Labor union representatives at Tiffin face up to their problems.

thusiasm, as laymen under good leadership shared many of the problems, temptations and concerns which are theirs in their several occupations. Membership in some of the groups was small (there were, for example, only two attorneys present). But the reports from all the groups indicated the interest and concern that must be evident among Christians in making their faith relevant to daily work.

The writer had the privilege of sitting in briefly on eight of the thirteen vocational meetings. It is impossible in the space permitted for this article to give a detailed story of the way things went in all thirteen groups. Everywhere there was a real effort to get at the heart of the question—how can we live by our Christian faith so that our occupations may become "expressions of our Christian vocation?" Delegates kept reminding themselves that they are responsible Christians, lay ministers in churches all around the nation.

Here were the agricultural workers, for example, many of them farmers from several states. They thought of some of the moral problems of their occupation. They talked about the ethics of price controls, and about the need for good management as a form of Christian stewardship to the end that farmlands might go to new generations without deterioration from erosion or other land misuse. They recommended generous support of CROP as a Christian method of controlling heavy surpluses here and giving aid to starving people in other places.

Members of the legal profession in their meetings agreed that "an attorney is not just an employee bound to do the bidding of his client, whatever that may be, but ought always to recognize a Christian ethical responsibility to seek out the truth in each situation and temper his advice and counsel in the light thereof."

Probe Role of TV

Radio, TV and newspaper men at the conference began their report with the affirmation "that any profession which molds public opinion can be a significant Christian vocation . . . We acknowledge our responsibility as Christians to resist commercial influences . . . by careless self-seeking advertisers and organized pressure groups; to maintain high program and editorial standards, and to do all we can to improve the tastes and sense of values of those influenced by the media we use."

The home makers group, composed of 18 women under the leadership of Mrs. J. Kenneth Kohler, invited the Communications group to meet with them in one of their sessions. Then the discussion centered around such important themes as comics, radio and TV programs which might be used in Christian homes, where parents are trying to help children to become responsible Christian citizens and are handicapped in their task by some kinds of radio programs and advertising, and by a flood of unsavory comic books which constantly bid for attention.

Eleven educators from four states had a busy time in their meetings, considering such questions as: 1. How can a public school teacher be a faithful Christian witness and also observe the basic American principle of the separation of church and state; 2. What is the fundamental relationship of the Protestant church and the public schools; 3. What temptations and ethical problems do teachers encounter?

Strong groups of engineers, government workers and sales people worked on problems they felt in their several

A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

From the Tiffin Conference on The Christian and His Daily Work

As Christians, a vocation has been given to us. We are called into the commonwealth of God; and, because we are given citizenship in the realm of Christ, we are committed to the service of our fellowmen and our communities.

Our special concern is to make some progress in transforming our occupations into expressions of our Christian vocation—into a lay ministry. We are humbled by the greatness of our responsibility. We are grateful for our heritage which has taught us that daily work is service to God; and that as such it should be done by us.

To see our daily work as a service to God is to understand it as part of God's creative work. It is to judge it in the light of the divine purpose. It is to give first place to such criteria as honest craftsmanship, persistent doing of constructive work, and contribution to the well-being of men.

To transform occupations into vocation includes also a great social task. We have a responsibility not only to do our work as a service to God but also to do all that we can to make it possible for others to view and to do their work as a service to God. We affirm the dignity of all useful work; the right to work; the right to a living wage. The development of technology has made it increasingly important to find new ways to provide for many workers appropriate channels for meaningful participation in making the decisions which so vitally affect them; and to direct the use of our resources—natural and human—to provide a fuller life.

We have found the sharing of our common concerns, of our divergent views and difficulties, to be not only possible but also fruitful in arriving at greater understanding. We have discovered more satisfactory answers through shared experience than is possible when we consult only ourselves or exclude those who differ from us.

We are all bound together in one bundle of life. As members of the Church, we are one body, the members in their different functions contributing to the welfare of the whole. Such is the pattern for the social order.

We are committed to truth because we confess Jesus Christ as the Truth. We have a responsibility to shed the light of truth on and to seek further truth about the issues which affect the lives of men. The specialization of today and our dependence on each other have made it more urgent that people of different occupations and diverse interests make use of the means of information and discussion to discover areas of agreement. We are pledged to the patient pursuit of truthful understanding within our fellowship and in the service of our community.

We came together in this conference on "The Christian and His Daily Work" as men committed to God's design for us and our world. Here we have found renewed strength through shared purpose, gained a clearer vision of our personal and corporate responsibility, and rededicated ourselves to the service of the Kingdom of Christ.

occupations. From the engineers' statement we take this paragraph: "We are grateful for the scientists and engineers of the past, whose sacrifices and endless labor searched out and applied God's truth, for the wonderful patterns which God gave his creative world, for the accumulated knowledge from the past upon which we must build our work. This sense of gratitude to God and to those of the past needs to be expressed in our life. We recognize the need of observing spiritual laws with the same precision required by engineers in observing physical and mathematical laws. We have a deep concern for the end use of our products for the good of mankind."

Labor, Management Represented

A group of industrial managers thought of a dozen problems they wanted to discuss, but they found time to deal with only four. Among other conclusions to which they came was this: "Management at all levels has a very real responsibility for the spiritual and personal problems of the workers. Some of the possibilities here include the calling of industrial chaplains, establishing chapels, and setting aside a voluntary devotional period for the workers, on company time, and counselling by supervisors and foremen, as well as at practical managerial and ownership levels."

Labor representatives and industrial workers also had good groups at Tiffin. Said the industrial workers: "Although no universally satisfactory answer to the problem of applying Christian ethics to industrial work is likely to come out of a discussion like this, it was felt that a great improvement in management-labor relations might ensue if each of the parties in a controversy would approach the matter in an attitude of Christian good will. As in all other areas of human relations, when the spirit of Christ takes possession of the hearts of working men and of those who manage industry, miracles of understanding grace can be anticipated."

Labor representatives said "We are not unmindful that in the process of achieving labor's goals and objectives ofttimes un-Christian attitudes and actions are generated." But they asked that fellow lay Christians in the Church might more frequently "do a bit of soul searching to discover if we really are attempting to learn the truth about the men and women of labor and their desires and purposes." "Labor's main objectives," they said, "are the gathering of individuals together for a common good, for the purpose of social justice and a fuller life made possible by a better living standard and a sense of economic security."

Another one of the very small groups at Tiffin was that of the health services who "heartily recommend that our young people be encouraged to seek opportunities for Christian service through the healing arts, dedicating themselves to the cause of serving mankind here and abroad, thus perpetuating that ministry of healing begun by our Lord."

All the groups were enthusiastic in joining with a statement offered by those whose work as retail sales people brings them into close contact with the public "That study and discussion groups be set up in churches, bringing together all vocations for the purpose of viewing their tasks in the light of Christian faith and practice."

Stress Tough Choices

The Tiffin conference opened with an address by Dr. Elton Trueblood, Director of Religious Policy of the United States Information Agency. Speaking of "The Christian Meaning of Our Daily Work," he gave many illustrations to show how American laymen are becoming increasingly conscious of their opportunities for Christian leadership.

Another headline speaker was Colonel Francis Pickens Miller, Presbyterian layman from Charlottesville, Virginia. His address, on "A Christian Layman's Responsibility in His Job," preceded all the group sessions, and was of real value in setting the stage for the kind of thoughtful consideration the conference aimed to give to the theme "The Christian and His Daily Work."

At the dining room table Saturday noon two of the delegates, Russell Brockett, of Pittsburgh Synod, and Milton W. Meyers, of North Illinois synod, spoke out of their personal experience on "The Toughest Decision I Had to Make." Not on the printed program, yet very definitely related to the kind of Christian decisions laymen are making all the time, was a statement made by Leroy Gore, Evangelical and Reformed layman and editor of *The Sauk-Prairie Star,* of Sauk City, Wisconsin. He told of his decision to withdraw the support he had once given Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, and of his experiences in conducting a Wisconsin campaign for the recall of the Junior Senator from that state.

Dr. James E. Wagner, President of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, preached the sermon at the communion service which concluded the conference.

The Tiffin meetings were just the beginning of many efforts which will be made in the future to help Christian laymen to recognize the opportunities they have in their daily work for the exercise of a Christian ministry. A Report of the conference recommendations and the vocational group meetings has been published under the title, *Christians At Work,* which may be secured at 25 cents or five copies for one dollar from the Commission on Christian Social Action, or from the Churchmen's Brotherhood, 1720 Chouteau Avenue, St. Louis 3, Missouri.

In John Bright's *The Kingdom of God* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, $3.75) the professor of Hebrew and Old Testament at the Richmond, Virginia, Union Theological Seminary has traced the concept of the Kingdom of God through the Old and New Testaments. His treatment is at once scholarly, relevant, and alive. We recommend a careful reading the next time you are tempted to talk facilely about "Building the Kingdom," or, conversely, to conclude that since it is God's kingdom, there is nothing for you to do.

The Tiffin Conference represents a milestone in the life of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. But it is the next mile and the mile after that that count.

The delegates were not unaware of this, as is evident from their recommendations for "follow-up," which include:

- **that the names of delegates be published in the conference report, so that churches might invite these people to address groups or lead discussions on Christianity in daily work.**
- **that between fall of 1954 and spring of 1955 conferences on the Christian and his daily work be held in the synods by synodical committees on Christian Social Action in cooperation with the Churchmen's Brotherhood and Women's Guild.**
- **that conferences in local congregations be planned between fall of 1955 and spring of 1956.**

An outline of procedures in setting up such conferences will be available in September.

Christian Community

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A NEW CHAPTER

After five and one-half years of publication as a joint venture of the Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed social action agencies, *Christian Community* this month appears under the sponsorship of the Commission on Christian Social Action alone.

The reason for this is simple. Beginning with September, *Social Action*, our older brother in the field of social action periodicals, is coming out in a more diversified and—we hope—popular form. The Council for Social Action believes that this will sufficiently meet the need for a monthly social action publication among its constituency.

The Commission on Christion Social Action hopes that *Social Action* will increasingly enjoy a wider acquaintance and use among the ministers and lay people of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. But we do not believe that at the present time this will be enough. We covet the opportunity of coming to your desk regularly with more news of what is going on in our churches and more information concerning the tasks with which we are struggling. We have, therefore, come to the conclusion that until we find a better way of meeting this need, we shall continue *Christian Community*.

We have planned this paper as a newsletter and program service. It is sent without charge to pastors, to all social action committees of record, to synodical and regional Women's Guild Christian Social Action chairmen. Others interested may secure it on request, with the suggestion that they pay fifty cents per year to cover cost of printing and postage. Individual copies of specific issues may be secured at five cents, or three cents each for ten or more.

May we encourage pastors and social action committee chairmen to order group subscriptions, five or ten in a bundle, to distribute to lay leaders and key people in the church. They will want to know about the Tiffin Conference and about the other issues now being planned.

One further word. This is in the strictest sense of the word a *friendly* separation. It has nothing to do with any opinion or judgment as to the proposed merger of our two denominations. We expect the official representatives of both bodies to meet this challenge responsibly and creatively. Neither have we had any disagreement as to theological approach or social policy. It is merely a question of what tools we find most useful to get our respective jobs done now. We shall continue to work together in sponsoring seminars, in editing and promoting *Social Action*, and in any other area that commends itself.

A SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

September	5—Labor Sunday—Read Labor Sunday Message from Pulpit or distribute to congregation (5c each, $2.25 per 100 from National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, New York).
September	14-16—Meeting of Commission on Christian Social Action, Burlington Hotel, Burlington, Iowa. Conference on A Responsible Society in First Church, Wednesday, September 15. All invited.
October	3—World Communion Sunday.
October	11-13—United Nations—World Order Seminar. New York City. Probable Registration, $5.75. Hotel and Meals extra. Write for information to Commission office.
October	24—United Nations Day and World Order Sunday. Use October issue **Christian Community** and National Council of Churches leaflet. Plan a study course using **We Are Responsible** and **Christian Faith and International Responsibility** (30c).
November	2—Election Day. Too late to order Voting Record! Get it early.
Nov. 28 - Dec.	3—National Council of Churches General Assembly. Boston, Massachusetts.
December	29-30—Conference on Religion and Public Education. Webster Groves, Missouri.
January	16-22—Church and Economic Life Week.
February	1-3—Conference on Christian Commitment and Christian Community. Sheraton-Gibson Hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio. Commissions and Synodical Committees on Evangelism, Stewardship, and Christian Social Action.
February	3-4—Commission on Christian Social Action, Cincinnati, Ohio.
February	13—Race Relations Sunday.
February	15-18—Churchmen's Washington Seminar.
April	18-22—Workshop on the City Church. Cincinnati, Ohio.

Speaking of Books

One of the excellent books stimulated by the World Council of Churches' emphasis on Christianity in our daily occupations is *Work and Vocation: a Christian Discussion,* edited by John Oliver Nelson (Harper, $2.75). In addition to Dr. Nelson, Paul S. Minear, Robert L. Calhoun, Robert S. Michaelson, and Robert S. Bilheimer contribute chapters dealing with the problem of work and vocation in scripture, in Christian history, in American industrial society, as well as with work as Christian vocation today, and a Christian strategy for relating faith and job to each other in a more vital and dynamic way.

The USA Study Committee of the World Council enlisted a committee of Biblical scholars, theologians, and laymen to direct the study and criticize the final text. The book is therefore not as much an academic document as the names of the writers might suggest. At the same time their individual gifts have not been suppressed in the writing.

To cite just one example of its perceptiveness, Dr. Bilheimer draws on the recent experience of distinguished American diplomats to throw light on the text, "We are ambassadors of Christ," to comment: "Christians do not operate a comprehensive Point Four program; they only live in the embassies." (p. 203). Write your own sermon!

* * * *

It is a bit late, considering the fact that the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches will be past history by the time this newsletter is read, but there is still much meat in the preparatory surveys published by Harpers under the title, *The Christian Hope and the Task of the Church.* ($5.00).

The entire volume is worth careful study. Those who attended the Tiffin conference will be especially interested in the chapter on "The Laity — The Christian in His Vocation."

VOTE—IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING

It *does* matter how you vote! You stand a better chance of voting your convictions if you get the 1954 Congressional Voting Record. Available from the Commission on Christain Social Action, 10 cents each.